

State of Alaska FY2003 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Public Safety Village Public Safety Officer Program Budget Request Unit Budget Summary

Village Public Safety Officer Program Budget Request Unit

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BRU Mission

The mission of the Division of Alaska State Troopers is to preserve the public peace and to protect life and property.

(Note: The Division of Alaska State Troopers consists of three closely interrelated BRUs: the Alaska State Troopers, AST Detachments and the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program. Much of the following discussion applies to elements in all three BRUs.)

BRU Services Provided

The Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) BRU consists of three components that provide funding to support the VPSO program. The three components include VPSO Contracts, VPSO Support and VPSO Administration.

Throughout rural Alaska, the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) is often the only person responsible for a broad range of public safety needs. These include law enforcement support duties, probation and parole duties, emergency medical services, search and rescue missions, and fire prevention activities. Currently eighty-five VPSOs present an ongoing positive public safety presence in eighty-four rural communities. VPSOs also often assist Troopers in alcohol and drug enforcement efforts.

VPSO oversight troopers and detachment troopers travel regularly to all villages under their oversight. During these visits troopers provide training through special VPSO training modules on specific subjects such as report writing and search and rescue coordination. The close working relationship developed between VPSOs and Troopers helps VPSOs in carrying out their duties, as well as assuring the VPSOs that the state troopers will be there during crisis situations.

VPSOs are employees of native regional non-profit corporations that share in direction of VPSOs' daily activities with village leaders and troopers. VPSOs prevent child abuse, prevent domestic violence, reduce aggravated assaults, prevent injuries, save lives and protect property in rural Alaska.

BRU Goals and Strategies

The main goal of the Division of Alaska State Troopers is to protect and serve the public. As related to the VPSO Program, this will be accomplished by taking action to:

Continue to provide for quality public safety in the areas of water and fire safety and other non-criminal areas for rural remote communities;

Continue to increase illegal alcohol interdiction in the areas where the residents have chosen to ban sale or importation of alcohol;

Continue to provide first responder criminal investigation involving misdemeanor and felony property crime investigations; and

Continue to increase peer and investigative support to the VPSOs to help increase their longevity on the job and make for more competent first responder investigators.

Key BRU Issues for FY2002 – 2003

VPSO TURNOVER RATE - There are many factors that cause the high VPSO turnover rate. One of the factors is low pay. When the program was started in 1980, the VPSO rate of pay was the same as a Correctional Officer. In 2001, the Correctional Officer is making \$15.26 and the VPSO \$13.81 (based on the lowest amount paid by one of nine non-profits and including an estimated pay increase for probation and parole duties) starting out.

NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS FUNDS LITIGATION - NARF filed a suit against the Department alleging, among other things, that the Department is not providing equal public safety in the rural areas of the State compared to the urban areas. Currently there are approximately 83 rural communities without a VPSO or an Alaska Police Standard Council certified law enforcement officer. (Based on communities with more than fifty people).

Major BRU Accomplishments in 2001

RURAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORT - Provided by a combination of Troopers from the VPSO support component and Detachment BRU/component:

VPSO FY01 Statistics -

- 1,353 VPSO visits
- 712 Village Police Officer (VPOs) visits/contacts [VPOs are employed by some rural villages]
- 1,013 investigative visits to villages
- 727 overnight visits were accomplished
- 799 Training hours conducted by Oversight Troopers

VPSO FY00 Statistics -

- 1,270 VPSO visits
- 556 overnight visits were accomplished
- 766 Training hours conducted by Oversight Troopers

VPSO FY99 Statistics -

- 944 VPSO visits
- 366 overnight visits were accomplished
- 568 Training hours conducted by Oversight Troopers

Village Public Safety Officer Program
BRU Financial Summary by Component

All dollars in thousands

	General Funds	FY2001 Actuals Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	FY2002 Authorized Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	FY2003 Governor Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
<u>Formula</u>												
<u>Expenditures</u>												
None.												
<u>Non-Formula</u>												
<u>Expenditures</u>												
Contracts	5,351.5	0.0	95.0	5,446.5	6,529.5	0.0	196.1	6,725.6	6,398.4	0.0	0.0	6,398.4
Support	1,902.2	0.0	7.8	1,910.0	1,739.9	0.0	0.0	1,739.9	2,211.4	0.0	0.0	2,211.4
Administration	261.5	0.0	1.5	263.0	269.6	0.0	0.0	269.6	277.8	0.0	0.0	277.8
Totals	7,515.2	0.0	104.3	7,619.5	8,539.0	0.0	196.1	8,735.1	8,887.6	0.0	0.0	8,887.6

Village Public Safety Officer Program

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2003

The FY2003 Governor's request service changes include the annualized cost of the regional public safety officer program.

Village Public Safety Officer Program

Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component

From FY2002 Authorized to FY2003 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2002 Authorized	8,539.0	0.0	196.1	8,735.1
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Contracts	-131.1	0.0	-101.1	-232.2
-Support	270.6	0.0	0.0	270.6
-Administration	8.2	0.0	0.0	8.2
Proposed budget decreases:				
-Contracts	0.0	0.0	-95.0	-95.0
Proposed budget increases:				
-Support	200.9	0.0	0.0	200.9
FY2003 Governor	8,887.6	0.0	0.0	8,887.6